Budget Leakage Enquiry and his subsequent resignation, he would scarcely have had an obituary at all, just a paragraph or two ('. . . started life as an engine-driver . . . political career brought to a sudden end . . . undoubted flair for . . . events still fresh in the public memory . . .'). Now, little by little, his obituary will be growing again; never to recover its previous size or warmth, tending to harp back to its first draft (*. . „ genial disposition ... fund of good stories. .. accomplished after-dinner speaker .. /) and to hurry over the later phases of his career.

Turning over these obituaries, used and unused, old and new, gives a vivid sense of how, as the years pass, great and small ones ebb and flow with the moon—here a peer and Lord-Lieutenant, Lord Kylsant, whose steady obituary accretion is suddenly inter-rupted by a term of imprisonment for fraud; here a clergyman, the Rector of Stiffkey, who would scarcely have had an obituary at all if he had not been unfrocked, starved in a barrel, and thrown to circus lions; here a pacifist and sometime chairman of the I.L.P., Mr. Clifford Allen, whose chilly obituary note blossomed into an adulatory column when he became Lord Allen of Hurtwood ('Principle was paramount with him, but on questions of procedure he was prepared to compromise[1]); here an ex-Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald, subject to more obituary revision, perhaps, than, any of his contemporaries, his obituary in its published form containing vestiges of each stage of his astonishing career from a reputed dangerous revolutionary in whose eyes the Russian Revolution brought *a

sort of spring-tide joy all over Europe', to one who, according to Lord Snow-den, boasted, probably justifiably: 'To-morrow every duchess in London will be wanting to kiss me.'

The full range of human importance is registered in obituaries, between the minimum recorded at all:

> He was born on , educated at and----, and ordained priest at the age of----------.
> He was formerly Rector of----------, ----. He married- , daughter of , of----------;

or, in another *genre:*

> In London, aged . A well-known member of the Stock